

Office of the Public Defender Baton Rouge

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS **CONTRACT CONFLICT PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES**

The Office of the Public Defender Baton Rouge is requesting a statement of qualifications from law firms or individual lawyers interested in providing conflict case public defender services on a contractual basis. The Contract Conflict Public Defender (CCPD) will provide client-centered legal representation for indigent criminal defendants charged in the 19th Judicial District Court with a felony offense who qualify for appointed counsel and cannot otherwise be represented by the Office of the Public Defender. OPDBR anticipates entering into a one or two year contract with up to 8 lawyers who are available to serve on a roster for conflict public defender services upon completion of the request for qualifications process.

Services Requested/Qualifications

- **General Description** - All indigent criminal defendants charged under LA. Revised Statutes Code with a felony offense who qualify for appointed counsel are referred to the Office of the Public Defender Baton Rouge. In instances where OPDBR has a conflict, the office will refer defendants to one of a roster of contract conflict public defenders (CCPD). The CCPD will provide legal representation for each of these defendants from court appointment through trial/other resolution, sentencing, and if applicable filing of a motion for appeal/withdrawal of trial counsel. The CCPD may withdraw upon completion of the case as allowed by the Rules of Professional Conduct.
- **CCPD Experience/Overhead** - The CCPD must have prior work experience in criminal law. At least one year's criminal trial experience is strongly preferred. The contractor must provide continuity of representation while at the same time ensuring effective back-up coverage if absences in court are anticipated. The CCPD must be responsive to the client, other attorneys, and witnesses in a case. For example, OPDBR expects phone calls to the CCPD to be returned in a timely manner. The CCPD is expected to have a physical office location where clients and witnesses can meet with them in preparation of their legal matter.
- **Reporting** - The CCPD will have access to the OPDBR case tracking and management software, DefenderData. The CCPD or their designee is responsible

for the timely inputting, updating, and closing of all case files in DefenderData as well as time spent on those cases. It would be preferred that the CCPD have a secretary or office manager on staff to assist in keeping DefenderData.

- **Associated Counsel** - The CCPD may employ associated counsel to assist at the CCPD's expense. The CCPD and all associated counsel shall be licensed to practice law before the courts of record for the State of Louisiana. The CCPD shall be responsible for overseeing and approving services performed by other attorneys. The CCPD must immediately report to the Office of the Public Defender any change affecting the maintenance of membership in good standing of the Louisiana State Bar Association. No legal interns shall be used unless agreed to in advance by OPDBR.
- **Public Defense Standards** - All public defense services will be provided in accordance the Rules of Professional Conduct and standards and guidelines promulgated by the Louisiana Public Defender Board pursuant to LA R.S. 15:148.

Compensation

OPDBR will compensate CCPDs as follows: yearly (September 2017- September 2018) rate: \$45,000. Reasonable costs incurred for jury trials, pretrial litigation and writ practice, and experts may also be reimbursed with prior approval by OPDBR. OPDBR will provide malpractice insurance coverage for all cases handled in the lawyer's position as CCPD.

Case Appointments

The above compensation structure is based on an anticipated yearly caseload not to exceed 165 felony case units. OPDBR will notify the CCPD by email of a new appointment within 24 hours of that appointment being made by the court. Cases are appointed to OPDBR either at 72 hour bond appearance (call out/tv court) or at arraignment.

Requirements and Manner of Submission

Qualifications are requested **on or before 4:30 pm August 21, 2017**. Interested applicants should send their qualifications/resume by email to mmitchell@opdbr.org & cc: lblouin@opdbr.org or hand deliver at 222 St. Louis Street 7th Floor Baton Rouge, LA 70802; Attn: Chief District Defender Michael A. Mitchell.

Please be sure to include the following in your resume and/or cover letter:

- **Experience** - summarize experience relevant to criminal defense.
- **References** - Identify three references who can attest to your experience and capabilities as they relate to services requested. The references must include contact name, address, and telephone number.
- **Office address and contact information**

Evaluation Criteria

Qualifications will be evaluated according to the following criteria, listed in order of importance:

1. Experience and technical competence of the lawyer and support staff considering the scope of work.
2. Recent experience and expertise with similar work.
3. Capacity to perform the work (including any specialized services) within the time limitations, considering the lawyer's current and planned workload.
4. Past record of performance on and with private industry, including such factors as control of costs, quality of work, ability to adhere to schedules, cooperation, responsiveness and ability to communicate with a range of participants.

Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed for qualifications and assessment of the capabilities and experience of respondents to act as a Contract Conflict Public Defender. A determination will be made regarding which lawyers should be contacted for further consideration. Selected lawyers will be contacted for an interview by Chief District Defender Michael A. Mitchell to discuss their qualifications and to answer specific questions. The purpose of the interviews will be to evaluate the experience and fitness of the lawyer and to clarify and assure understanding of the requirements of the contract. Following interviews, references will be checked on finalist lawyers.

Questions

Questions regarding the application process, scope of work, and time frame are to be addressed to Chief District Defender Michael A. Mitchell mmitchell@opdbr.org & cc: Deputy Chief District Defender Lindsay Blouin lbouin@opdbr.org

Estimated Timeline

Task	Date
- Requests for submissions issued	8/10/17
- Submissions due by 4:30 pm	8/21/17
- Interviews	8/14 - 8/23
- Selection of CCPDs completed	8/25/17
- Contract execution by	9/5/17